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03500.013606.1

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)	
	:	Examiner: Ishrat I. Sherali
MANABU YAMAZOE ET AL.)	
	:	Group Art Unit: 2624
Application No.: 10/629,637)	
	:	
Filed: July 30, 2003)	
	:	
For: IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD,)	April 24, 2006
APPARATUS AND MEMORY	:	(Monday)
MEDIUM THEREFOR)	

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Sir:

In the Office Action dated March 23, 2006, the Examiner entered a restriction requirement between the following two groups of claims.

Group I, Claims 6-8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 19-21, is drawn to judging one of an exposure condition or image taking condition of the original image and correcting the image based on the judgment/detection.

Group II, Claims 15-18 and 22-32, is drawn to detecting luminosity of a highlight light and shadow point, obtaining hue of the highlight and shadow point and executing color correction.

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement.

Applicants submit that the claims in the different groups are so closely related as to not require separate fields of search. A duplicative search, with possibly inconsistent results, may occur if the restriction requirement is maintained. In addition, any nominal burden placed upon the Examiner to perform a search for the overall invention is outweighed by the public interest in not having to obtain and study separate patents that may issue from Applicants' invention if the restriction requirement is maintained.

Nevertheless, in order to comply with the requirements set forth in 37 C.F.R.

§ 1.143, Applicants provisionally elect, with traverse, to prosecute Group II, Claims 15-18 and 22-32.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin J. Oliver", is written over a horizontal line.

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